

People Building Peace

*How Canada Prepares its Civilians and Soldiers for
the Peace-Building Missions of the 21st Century*

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Self-introduction.

The objective of today's seminar is to allow us to share views on how we can best prepare our officials for the challenges of the peace-building missions of today and tomorrow. As you all know, Canada has a long experience in this area, but in recent years, the nature of the missions in which we have participated has changed significantly. Unlike the traditional peace-keeping missions of old, today's operations are highly complex and require the participation of a wide-range of professionals. With increasing frequency, military personnel find themselves working alongside diplomats, police officers, aid officials and representatives from our correctional services.

As a result, the training we provide each one of them has had to evolve. Our Foreign Service Officers, for example, are no longer merely briefed on the political, social and economic conditions they will find upon their arrival in theatre. They are also often provided with extensive personal security training which will teach them, for example, how to behave if their convoy comes under attack or if they find themselves stranded in a minefield. As for our soldiers, their training unsurprisingly continues to focus on combat, but they are also given extensive briefings on the culture and history of their country of assignment. Finally, all Canadian participants, be they military or civilian, train together whenever possible, and are briefed on each other's roles and responsibilities. If everybody is on the same page, it is obviously easier for us to bring greater coherence to our efforts as a government.

To better understand how Canada prepares its officials for the peace-building missions of the 21st century, there is nothing like a good example. For this reason, my presentation today will focus on our mission in Afghanistan. More than any other, this mission is, I believe, typical of the type of operations to which developed countries such as Canada and, increasingly, Japan as well, will have to contribute in the future. To set the stage, I will first present a broad overview of Canada's efforts in Afghanistan. This will make clear the complexity and challenges of those new nation-building operations. Then, I will explain how Canada prepares its soldiers, police officers and civilian officials to ensure that they all have the necessary tools to work safely and efficiently to advance Canada's objectives in places like Afghanistan.

Canada's role in Afghanistan: an overview

The tragedy of September 11 set in motion a global campaign against terrorism, one in which Afghanistan remains a central front. But Afghanistan is more than that: it is also a global narcotics threat and a fragile state where poverty is widespread. As a result, it has become one of Canada's foremost international security priorities and encompasses the largest concentration of our defence, development and diplomacy efforts, what is often referred to as a "whole-of-government approach".

The successful reconstruction of Afghanistan is essential to creating lasting security in the country, the region and the rest of the world. Canada's goal is to help the emergence of an independent stable, secure, self-sustaining, democratic, and prosperous Afghanistan that never again serves as a terrorist haven.

We are not alone in pursuing this objective. Canada is part of an integrated international effort which includes the Afghan people, the UN, NATO, the World Bank, NGO partners and dozens of other countries. Since 2002, Afghanistan has been Canada's largest recipient of development assistance and by 2011, we will have disbursed nearly \$1 billion for its reconstruction. Over 18,000 Canadian Forces personnel have been deployed to Afghanistan since 9/11. The current Canadian contingent of 2,300 is helping to bring security to the Kandahar region and a Canadian general currently commands the NATO ISAF multinational brigade responsible for Kandahar and five other southern provinces. On top of that, Canada assumed command in August 2005 of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), again in Kandahar, the objective of which is to enhance the reach and legitimacy of provincial and national institutions.

Our accomplishments to date are numerous and varied. We played an important role in establishing a mechanism for the cantonment of more than 12 000 heavy weapons. These are the same weapons that were used to destroy much of the country in the previous decades. Canada is also the second largest contributor to a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process which helped 63,000 former soldiers reintegrate into civilian life. Incidentally, as some of you may know, Japan is *the* most important contributor in this area. In the area of microfinance, we are assisting thousands of Afghans, mainly women once relegated to the margins of society, to access credit and finance in order to pursue new livelihoods.

This said, we are not yet out of the woods. Plenty of difficulties remain. Major challenges continue to confront Afghanistan including security and justice sector reform, corruption, the disarmament of illegal armed groups, the need to reduce narcotics production and trafficking. More must also be done to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights, to strengthen good governance and to facilitate economic reconstruction.

Although security is fundamental to making progress in Afghanistan, success cannot be assured by military means alone. To achieve our goals, we must bring together our security, governance and development efforts in order to leverage our resources and expertise across all levels of government.

Integrated Training for All

Reflecting this objective, much of the pre-deployment training of our officials is integrated. This means that whenever possible, we try to ensure that our diplomats, soldiers, police officers and development officials spend time together, study together and train together. Of course, all of them also receive some training which is specific to the tasks and responsibilities they will assume upon being deployed. However, since they will have to work together in theatre, training is tailored to ensure representatives from different departments integrate as smoothly as possible. This seems to be working well, as many participants reported that inter-departmental collaboration in the field is smooth and effective.

Based on their long peace-keeping experience, the Canadian Forces have developed numerous training packages. Most of these are delivered at a military facility, the Peace Support Training Center, in Kingston, Ontario. This is where most of our civilian officials, diplomats or development workers, are usually trained, for a period lasting between seven or ten days. It includes:

- **Mine Awareness:** Participants are trained to recognize and avoid landmines. This includes hands-on exercises in which they learn how to get out of a minefield or what to do in case they are injured. Information is also provided on how to deal with Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and unexploded ordinances.
- **Medical/Health Preparation:** As you can imagine, Afghanistan is a difficult and dangerous place to work and thus, it is crucial to prepare each officer accordingly. Consequently, pre-departure training includes several courses on health hazards and how to treat them. An extensive first aid kit is given to all participants, who are also required to obtain a Standard First Aid certificate. On top of that, a one-day session on combat first aid is also provided to address specific needs that may arise in theatre. For this occasion, all participants, civilians, police and soldiers, take part in joint simulations. Finally, briefings are given on the mental stress which officials may endure while in Afghanistan such as Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, depression or even alcoholism.
- **Mission Operations:** Canadians working in Afghanistan have to deal not only with the local population, but also with representatives from other governments and international organizations. Therefore, we provide them with information on all known peacekeeping operations (NGO, Military and others).
- **Global Positioning System:** Traveling in a place like Afghanistan can be somewhat challenging. Indications are few and even roads are not always clearly marked. Thus, everybody going to Afghanistan receives training on how to use a military GPS.
- **Emergency Situations:** All officials also go through a number of exercises to teach them what to do in critical situations, such as if they are taken prisoner or if their convoy is ambushed. This is done via simulations which are designed to be as realistic as possible.
- **Inter-departmental Coordination:** Finally, meetings with Canadian Forces personnel departing on the next rotation are also arranged to discuss interdepartmental strategy and procedures.

Of course, training does not end in Canada. Once participants are deployed, more is provided. For example, before moving out of Kandahar Air Field or the PRT, rehearsals of Standard Operating Procedures are always executed. Communications training is also scheduled to be provided in theatre.

I would now like to take a few moments to discuss how we prepare our soldiers and police officers to assume their responsibilities. Looking first at our police force let me start with a few words on their role in our PRT.

The Role and Training of the Police

At the moment, six Canadian police officers are deployed in Kandahar. Their primary goal is to advance Security Sector Reform (SSR) within the province to ensure that development and reconstruction efforts proceed successfully. In practice, this means they help Afghans build the capacity of their local police force. Our officers have established relationships with their counterparts and serve as the point of contact between the PRT and the local police. They monitor, advise, mentor, and train local Afghan police forces, while working in cooperation with the military police of the Canadian Forces, Germany, which is the lead nation for Afghan police reform, the USA, the UN, and other like-minded international partners.

Unsurprisingly, prior to their departure, all Canadian police officers must complete an extensive pre-deployment training course in Ottawa. The training is mission-specific and is designed to inform participants on all known aspects of their deployment. It includes:

- **Firearms training:** Afghanistan is an armed mission and all Canadian Police officers have to use the same side arm (Smith and Wesson 9mm). They must qualify after a two-day training exercise. Added to the firearms arsenal is the C-7 service rifle, which each officer will be carrying during their deployment outside the protected areas. This part of the training also includes modules on foreign weapons which officers could encounter in theatre and provides them with the opportunity to handle those weapons directly. The Canadian Armed Forces provides this training.
- **ASP Baton Training:** This telescopic baton is given to police officers in Afghanistan. The proper training of this equipment is mandatory.
- **Chemical Weapon Training (OC Spray):** The Oleoresin Capsicum Spray is a self-defense chemical weapon carried by police officers while deployed in Afghanistan.
- **Self Defense:** A full day of police defensive tactics is given to police officers. All techniques are kept to the simplest procedures and are aligned with the needs of the mission.
- **General Military Knowledge:** The Afghanistan mission provides Canadian police officers with a unique opportunity to work with our military. The objective of this briefing is to allow them to learn more about the rank structure as well as the administration and corporate culture of the Canadian military.
- **Administrative Briefings:** comprehensive lectures are given to police officers to facilitate their administrative duties during mission. This includes details on the Canada Labour Code, Travel Allowances, The Code of Conduct, Media Relation and briefings from Foreign Affairs Canada and the Canadian International Developing Agency on the political, cultural, social and economic environments they will find upon arrival. Those briefings are supplemented by a cultural awareness program aimed at facilitating the adaptation of police officers to their new environment.

A Closer Look at Military Training

Moving on, let me now spend a few minutes to explain some of the specific training our soldiers undergo prior to deployment. Their responsibilities are different from those of police officers or civilians and this is reflected in the training they receive. They are already strong on security and defence issues, so pre-deployment training tends to focus on the specific needs of the mission. This includes modules on cultural awareness.

For smaller missions, e.g. UN missions in Haiti or the Congo, individual training is carried out at the Peace Support Training Centre (PSTC), in Kingston, Ontario, and usually lasts for about a week. However, preparations can stretch for up to a month for soldiers deployed on UN Military Observer missions. The main elements consist of:

- **Mission Specific Components:** Details on the mission and country of deployment, including briefings on the political and social conditions. Intelligence briefs on the history of the conflict and the various factions and parties involved.
- **Human Rights & Culture:** Information is also provided to all military personnel to ensure they are aware of human rights, trafficking in persons or gender equality issues which they may encounter in theatre. A module on Codes of Conduct, i.e. how a soldier is expected to behave, is also included.
- **Weapons Use:** Exercises focus on how to handle the specific weapons needed for the mission or how to recognize and operate those of the opposing parties.
- **Driving Skills:** Extra training is provided to ensure Canadian personnel is able to operate the various vehicles which will be used in theatre.
- **Legal Issues:** Briefing sessions are organized to explain the mandate of the mission, the chain of command or the specific rules of engagement.

For larger missions such as Afghanistan or, in the mid-90s, Bosnia, major units tasked for deployment developed a comprehensive training package based on the need to bring personnel up to speed not only on individual skills such as combat first aid or weapons training, but also on collective abilities. This includes a long list of "battle tasks standard" aimed at ensuring that a given soldier can operate effectively as part of his battle group in all aspects of combat and peace support operations. This includes, for example, convoy duties, ambush drills, casualty evacuations, patrolling, combat situations and operations in built up areas. Finally, soldiers also attend numerous lectures on the culture they are about to encounter so that they be more familiar with the cultural "dos and don'ts".

Compared with training sessions conducted at the Peace Support Training Center, the difference in the case of major and complex peacekeeping operations is that preparation can stretch for up to eight months prior to departure and is generally conducted on one of the Canadian Forces major military bases. On larger and more complex missions, there are often soldiers who come from outside the particular unit being dispatched and thus, collective training is very important. Another aspect which is particular to

Afghanistan is that compared to other recent deployments, there is much more training done under "combat" scenarios.

This completes my overview of the training procedures we have put in place for Canadian soldiers, police officers, diplomats and aid officials who take part in peace-building operations. Of course, everything is not perfect. Gaps still exist in our system, but we are improving all the time. We have come a long way since the establishment of our Peace Support Training Centre in 1996. Training has been, to a great extent, standardized and it continues to be updated as our experience and responsibilities within peace-building missions evolve.

Thank you for your attention.